







## *The Preface.*

### *Common Reason.*

**V**iew, and consider at your pleasure; but you will be deceived, if you think to feed either Eye or Fancy here: it is meat for their Master, *understanding*.

If you respect the manner of it, it is the voice of Oracles in Gregorian, without Quaver or Cratcher: It is Gold in wedges, the plainest the power, which flies the fair impressions of the Mint, lest it should be mixed: It is a Lady in her Night clothes, without paint or patch; who is so rich in her own, that she disdains to use a borrowed beauty. In a word, it is a Logical Discourse in Mood and Figure, clothed

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according to the old fashion; fit, but not fine.

The Peasant perswades himselfe there is no other Golden Rule in Arithmetique, then what is drawn in Golden Figures. The Pecunious Merchant would chuse Geometrical Instruments, not by the proportion of the Lines and Distances, but by the preciousness of the Matter wherein they'r drawn: and were a Dairie-maid to chuse her Mansion in Heaven, she would take up her Eternity no where, but in *the Milkie way*.

The Musician judges of the Ditty's goodness, by the fitness which the Words carry with his Aires and Lessons. The verbal Critique affects no Language, but what is stuff with Tropes and Metaphors, and blown up with Allusions and Eruditions. The Poetique Vein tastes no stile, but what by continual jumping and quavering in the Air, sympathizes with their Fiddling

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ling Fancies. Thus our English Palates are of late become French; nothing pleases but what is larded: yea, and Spanish too; nothing can frame it self to their humours, save mighty Oleo's, heapt up with a numerous variety of Heads and Feet, without head or foot. Thus, like *Asops greedy one*, they lose the Substance for the Shadow, and will never take the pains to possess themselves of the Oceans treasure, unless they finde it prodigiously floating at the top; having neither art nor breath enough to dive, like Negro's, to the bottom to fetch it up. That face is in their eyes the sole beautiful, which is most bedawb'd with painting; they judge of the comeliness of bodies by the costliness of their Clothes; and like those foolish Birds, they stand picking at the empty colours of *Zenxis* false Grapes, rather than feed on the full substance of true ones, in a *Tempe* or a *Thessaly*. All men are drunk in

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their conceits, who speak not Phrases and Sentences at every breath; they account whatsoever is not Bombast, to be Barbarisme; they think there is no Utterance, but in Eloquence; no Reason, but in Rhetorique; no Force, but in Flourishes; no Light, but in Lightness. Hence they prefer an *Ovid's* Epigrams far before an *Aristotle's* Ethiques, because he *out-wits* him; and *Sidney's* *Arcadia* before *St. Austins* *Divine City*, because he *out-words* him; thus they support the tottering Stories of their new Buildings with beams of *Ash*, rather then of *Oak*, because it hath a smoother Bark; and compose their Walls of Chalk, rather then of Flint or Free-Stone, because it looks the whiter, and feels the softer: and whilest they in this manner cannot distinguish betwixt Good and Fie, (whereof the Oracle of Christianity, *St. Austin*, hath made a Treatise) they build Castles in the Air, which fall down as fast as they

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are set up. Who but a mad man would expect Eloquence in a Syllogisme; or esteem it dull and flat, because it hath not the Conceit of an *Epigram* in place of its Conclusion in the end of it? Who but a fool, will deny a Consequence deduced in lawful form, because it is not delivered in pure *Ciceronian*; or hold an evident Proposition to be false, because it hath neither Trope nor Figure; or reject a Logick Term as inept and insignificant, because it is not found in *Manutius* Phrases?

Let therefore an Orator breathe Eloquence, and a Poet Wit; it is the height of a Philosophers excellency, to speak Reason in proper terms, and to serve himself of Words, not to serve them; lest by that means he become guilty of disservice to his Reader, by withdrawing his attention from the substance which he pretends to teach him, Reason, to the empty sign and shadow of vain Ostentation and splendid Ignorance.

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rance. If therefore, Reader, you be one of these Verbals, shut this Book as soon as you have opened it; it is not (I assure you aforehand) for your Palate.

For if you would know the matter and form of it, It is *Reason* wrapt up in a common *Syllogisme*, and *God* (as once he was) in *Swaddling-clothes*, poor, but pure, re-appearing to the eyes of Infidels; not as then in the midst of Heathenisme, but in the heart of Christendome; who, as they have quite put out the Eye of Faith, so have they shut that other of Natural Reason so close, that all things are too gross and blunt to obtain entrance, save the most subtil Evidence of Demonstration and Metaphysical certainty. Hence they reject, as flat, all those Arguments (so much celebrated, and pressed by Antiquity) drawn from the Existency, Order, Beauty, Proportion, &c. of this visible World; because, say these Sages,

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ges, it is not Metaphysically certain, that we are not deceived, in Judging, that there is any real World without us, or Humane body with us; because all these things may haply be Illusions, Fantasies, Dreams, Fictions of the Brain, &c. with such monsters of men as these, I am to encounter in this present Treatise. Therefore to give scope to the Dispute, and way to their Nicety, I abstract from the real Existency of all sensible Creatures which seem to be within us, or without us; let them (for the present) be termed Illusions, Dreams, Fantasies, yet if Atheists onely grant me, that they either think in their hearts (with the Fool) there is no God; or doubt whether there be one or no, (which no Atheist can deny to be his thought) I here undertake, from that very thought of theirs alone, *That there is no God*, to prove *there is one*.

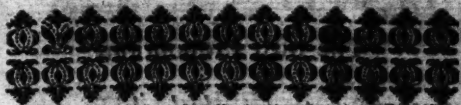
View therefore, and censure at your  
plea-

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pleasure, but not with a cursory and heedless Eye, as you read Pamphlets and Play-books, to gain Pastime, and lose Time; but with an eye fixed and open; weigh each Proposition in an equal balance, without losing a dram of the full weight of them; and that done, if you be satisfied, *Yield*; if unsatisfied, *Answer*.

The





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### The first Proposition.

**I**t seems that there is something now in Actual being.

### The second Proposition.

*Something is now in Actual Being.*

### The third Proposition.

*There hath alwayes been something in Actual Being.*

### The fourth Proposition.

*There shall be alwayes something in Actual being.*

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## The fifth Proposition.

Amongst all things which alwayes have been, are now, and ever shall be, there must be some ( I determine not yet whether One or more) which is absolutely, and essentially necessary, and not produced by any different cause; that is, to which it is Essential to be in Actual being, and so cannot but be from all Eternity to all Eternity the same, without the least change, or alteration.

## The sixth Proposition.

Whatsoever is an Actual Being Essentially, must be of it self; that is, independent of any Cause different from it.

## The seventh Proposition.

No Actual Being that is superfluous, defective, inordinate, absurd, or difform from

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from the Rule of right Reason, can be  
Essentially necessary, or of it self.

### The eighth Proposition.

No Actual Being, which is obnoxious to  
Deordination and Absurdities, can be  
Essentially necessary, or of it self.

### The ninth Proposition.

Nothing can be an Actual Being Essenti-  
ally, and of it self, which is not indued  
with the light of Reason.

### The tenth Proposition.

Onely Actual Reason in its full Perfection  
and Latitude, that is, Reason it self, is  
an Actual Being Essentially necessary.

### The eleventh Proposition.

Onely Actual Reason in its full perfection,  
or

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or Reason is self, & Essentially an actual  
Being of it self.

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## The first Attribute.

The Unity of God.

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## The third Attribute.

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The eighth Attribute.

*Of Gods Omnipotence.*

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The ninth Attribute.

*The Goodness of God.*

The tenth Attribute.

*The Unity and Sanctity of God.*

Ant

The

To the Right Honorable

**HENRY**

Lord Marquis of Dorchester,  
Earle of Kingston,  
Viscount Newark,  
Lord Pierrepont, &c.

My Lord,

SCARCE had this Alien  
(born in a Forreign, and  
nourisht in this Nation)  
opened an eye in search of  
a Noble *Mecenas*, to na-  
turalize and protect it, when  
a your

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

your Eminent VVorth and Learning attracted them wholly to your self: the one assuring a proneness to accept; the other, a power to set a true Estimate of this small Present. As small indeed as *Nothing*, if you regard the minuteness of the Volume; and yet as great as All things, if you consider what it exhibites, *viz.* GOD, the Best of All things, whose unavoidable existence it first endeavors to deduce by Logical Consequence, from what



## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

what every one most evidently experiences; then to shadow out his Essence; and lastly, to give some taste of his Attributes; and this only as a Foundation to a further discovery (in some ensuing Tracts) of his Power, Providence, Revelations, Mysteries, and Conduct of sinful Man to eternal Happiness. May it therefore please your Honor, to deprive your more Serious and Important Affairs of so small a portion of time, as  
'may

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

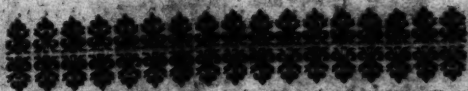
may suffice to cast an eye  
upon this small Tract: And  
for the Author of it, as you  
Justly possess the Ancient  
Domaine of his Name and  
Family, so you would please  
Favourably to Patronize  
those few dispersed Reliques  
which yet remain of it;  
whereof I am the least and  
lowest.

My Lord,

Your Honours most Humble

(though unknown) Servant,

*Vincent Hattecliffe.*



*Aut Deus, aut nihil.*

**God, or nothing.**

**The first Proposition.**

*It seems that there is something now in actual being.*



His Proposition is so evidently true, that it cannot possibly be denied, or called into question, by any one who ever reflected of what passed by most manifest experience in his own thoughts, and so neither ever was, nor ever can be impugned by any who are in their right wits.

B

The

*Something is now in Actual Being.*

*Latin and Greek*

**T**HIS Proposition, the first being supposed as a most clear undeniable truth, is most evident, for that very seeming to any one, that something is, must be something; for it must be a Representation that something now is: now every Representation represents something either truly, or falsely; if it represent something truly, then there is something; if falsely, yet there is a false Representation of something: now this Representation represents, to represent is to do something, that which does any thing, must be something; for nothing can do anything; therefore if there seem to be something in Actual Being, there is something in Actual Being; to wit, that very Representation, or seeming, that something is.

The

# God, or nothing.

3

The third Proposition.

*There hath alwayes been something in Actual Being.*

*Proof.*

**I**F ever there had been nothing at all in actual being, then there could not possibly be any thing now actually, which notwithstanding is proved to be true in the former Proposition, for that which should have been after there had been nothing at all, would either have been a being essentially necessary, which is impossible, for such a being must alwayes be, and so there would alwayes have been something; or it must have been a contingent being, that is, which can be at one time, and not be at another. Now every such contingent thing must have some cause to give it its actual existence, or being, which it hath not essentially of it self, for that which once was nothing, or had no actual being, can

B 2

never

never become any thing of it self, or without a cause distinct from it: for all things contingent are indifferent, or indetermined of themselves before they are, to be or not to be actually. Now it is impossible, that that which of it self is indeterminate, or indifferent to be, or not to be actually, should determine it self of it self to be; for then it should be indeterminate, and determinate to be essentially, which is a plain Chymera, and contradiction. Therefore every contingent thing must be determined to be, and be put in actual being by some producing cause really distinct from it: now every cause must be supposed to be actually, before it can be supposed to produce any thing; for to produce any thing, is to do something; but *nothing can do nothing*. If therefore the time had ever been, when there was nothing, there could never have been any thing, but *de facto*, there is now something, as is proved: therefore there was always something.

Neither

## God, or nothing.

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Neither would this truth be infringed, if one should deny all contingency, and put every thing to flow one after another, and have their beings for such, or such a space of time by inevitable necessity (which I will prove hereafter to be false,) for even this admitted for the present, yet the production of effects by distinct causes remaining still in force, it will remain evident by virtue of the former argument, that there hath been alwayes something in actual being, for had there ever been nothing at all, there could have been no cause of any thing; for *nothing can do nothing*. Neither can any thing possibly begin to be for such a determinate space of time, through an essential connexion to such a determinate time, as we shall see in the fifth Proposition.

B 3

The

6 *Arg Dens, ant nihil.*

*The fourth Proposition*  
*There shall always be something in all*  
*being.*

*Proof*  
**T**Here is now, and ever hath been something, as is proved; if therefore it could ever happen that all things should cease to be; either something essentially necessary (if there be any such being amongst all things) must cease to be, which is impossible; for if it be essentially necessary, it cannot but be; for every thing must alwayes be what it is essentially; or if there be nothing essentially necessary, all things contingent must cease to be; but that is impossible: for seeing every contingent thing must have its being from some cause really distinct from it, so long as that cause is apt, and able to conserve it in being; and that there is no other cause present, and enabled to destroy it, it must remain in its being:



# God) or nothing

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being; if therefore all things being con-  
tingent, shall to be, they must either lose  
their beings for want of a cause to con-  
serve all things, or by reason of some  
cause which destroyes all things. Not  
the first, for nothing can cease to be for  
want of that which is wholly impossi-  
ble, and so can conseruation adhere to  
its being, or not being. Now that it is  
impossible that any cause can give being  
to all things, is evident; for seeing this  
very cause is comprized within the num-  
ber of all things, if it give being as a di-  
stinct cause to all things, it must give be-  
ing to it self, and so be distinct from it  
self, and be supposed to have a being  
before it is; for every cause, as is said,  
must be supposed to have an actual being,  
before it can be supposed to do any thing,  
for *nothing can do nothing*: and yet if it be  
its own cause primarily and absolutely,  
it cannot be supposed to be before it is  
produced; therefore it will be either sup-  
posed to be before it is, or not to be when  
it is: it is therefore evident, that being  
but

8 *Aut Deum, aut nihil.*

there can be no cause of all things, all things which are, cannot cease to be, for want of a producing cause. Neither for the like reason can all things cease to be, by reason of some cause destroying all things, for such a cause is wholly impossible: for if all things be destroyed, there can nothing remain in actual being; but that which destroyes all things, must be supposed to be whilst it destroyes all things, for to destroy any thing is to do something, and *nothing can do nothing.*

If it should be replied, that that which destroyes all other things distinct from it, may cease to be, after it has destroyed all those things, and so all things will lose their actual beings, and there will be nothing: I answer, If all things, as we now suppose, be contingent, then nothing can destroy all things, save it self: for every contingent thing must have a cause, as is proved; it cannot therefore be supposed to be, unless the cause of it be also supposed to be actually, therefore it cannot destroy all things, save it self, and

## God, or nothing. 9

and remain it self in being, for then a contingent thing should be without a cause, which is impossible. And the same argument concludes, admitting, that all things were succeeding one another by way of cause and effect, through inevitable necessity. For then every thing in actual being must suppose the being of its cause, and so could never destroy all things save it self, because it could not be, when its cause is destroyed. Thus the fourth Proposition is made evident, that seeing there is something now, there must alwayes be something hereafter.

### The fifth Proposition.

*Amongst all things, which alwayes have been, are now, and ever shall be, there must be some (I determine not yet whether one or more) which is absolutely, and essentially necessary, and not produced by any different cause; that is, to which it is essential to be in actual being, and so cannot but*

but he from all eternity to all eternity;  
the same without the least change or al-  
teration. *Stetit quod in deo dicitur, et  
non mutatur, et ab omni tempore  
et in omni tempore.*

*Proof against the contrary.*  
**I**f there were no such essential necessity,  
any being as this, there could never  
either have been, be now, or ever hereaf-  
ter be any thing in actual being; but  
there always hath been, is now, and ever  
shall be something in actual being; as is  
already proved. *Exg.*

I prove the major, or first Proposition.  
Whatever is not essentially an actual  
being, cannot be of it self; for were it  
of it self, it must be of its own essence,  
or essentially; for the essence of a thing  
is nothing really, but the thing it self.  
Seeing therefore it cannot be of it self,  
whenever it is, it must be from some-  
thing else; that is, from some cause; now  
if that cause be not essentially of it self,  
it requires as much another cause, to  
have an actual being; as the former re-  
quired it; and so there will be no settle-  
ment

## God, or nothing.

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ment, nor firm foundation in causing, till one come to some cause which proceeds not from any other, but is essentially of it self: but every thing which is unsettled in it self, that it may have consistency, must have its firmness and foundation from something, which is in it self firm and constant; for otherwise it destroys it self, and falls to nothing: therefore seeing that every cause which is not essentially from it self, is as unsettled, and infirm in causing, as was the first cause mentioned in this Argument, there must necessarily be found some cause essentially from it self, to give firmness, as a foundation to all the rest. And to put a continuation in dependency of causes and effects, without such a firm cause as this, would be as foolish and absurd, as to put a wall of stones, one holding up another in the air, without any firm foundation, whereon some of them are to rest and stand. Neither will the infinite progress in multiplying contingent, or caused causes without end, help the matter.

For

For as a wall composed of infinite stones, one holding up another, without a foundation, would be as absurd, as if it consisted of a finite and determinate number of stones; so will it be in this infinite progress in causes, without being supported by a necessary existent cause; and there will be no other difference save this, that the one will be onely a finite, but the other an infinite absurdity. Nay, as the now instanced Wall would not be onely absurd, but a mere Chymera; and fiction of the Brain, unless it were sustained by some power able to supply the want of a foundation; for otherwise it would fall down as fast as it is builded up, and never come to have any frame of a Wall in it: So the fore-mentioned contingent causes and effects, would not onely be inept and foolish, but wholly implicative, and impossible: seeing in the former supposition there is nothing possible, which can supply the absence of that essential actual being, which is to give firmness to all contingent causes, as  
their

their foundation in causing; and consequently all things would be impossible, and it would imply a contradiction that any thing should ever be put in actual being: But that is manifestly false; for it is made evident, that something is now in actual being, therefore there is some actual being essentially necessary. Neither will it any way darken the light of this Proposition, if denying all contingency, one should say, that every thing proceeds by fatal necessity, and by an inevitable, and essential exigency one from another in their different successive durances, for such a determinate measure of time: (as hath been above touched, and shall hereafter be examined) For seeing even in this supposition every thing hath its necessity from its cause, and nothing from it self, or of it self, it will be as ridiculous, and implicative a supposition, as the former supposing contingency. For *Exempli gratia*, the effect *A*, will have no necessity of being now, but from the cause *B*; nor the cause *B*, but from its cause

cause C, and so each will be necessary dependently of another cause; therefore unless there be found a cause independent of all others, and having a necessary being essentially from it self, it will be a collection of causes and effects, hanging one upon another, like the stones of a Wall in the air, without all ground or foundation, and therefore as absurd, and implicative as the former. Whatsoever Systeme therefore be put of causes and effects, the truth of this fifth Proposition stands firm, and immoveable, that amongst all things in actual being, &c. there must be something essentially necessary.

Yet to give it more strength and light, I will endeavour to prove that the Systeme of succeeding subordinate causes, producing one another, without any cause improducible, (whereupon whatsoever cause that is produced, depends either mediately, or immediately) whether they have a contingent only, or a necessary connection with their effects,



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to be wholly impossible by this Argument.

If this System be, subsistent and solid, then all Causes and Effects, that either are now, or ever have been, are, and have been produced by a Cause, but that is impossible. *Ergo*, the *Minor* is evident, as containing nothing but the supposed System; for whatsoever is produced by a Cause, must have a Cause producing it. The *Major* I prove. If it were possible, that all the Effects and Causes that are now, or ever were, could be, or have been produced by a Cause, then it is possible that they should be all Causes, and Effects, and yet should not be all Causes and Effects that either are now, or ever were, but that is impossible. *Ergo*, The *Minor* is evident *ex terminis*. For it only asserts that both parts of a Contradiction, all, and not all, cannot be true. The *Major* I prove. Whatsoever is conceived to be produced by a Cause, must be conceived to have a producing Cause, this is clear. But if all Effects

and

and Causes, that either are, or ever were, be conceived to have a producing Cause, they must be conceived to be all, and not to be all. *Ergo*, This *Minor* is evident, for they must be conceived to be all, as is now supposed, and affirmed in the System; and yet they cannot be conceived to be all, for the cause which is conceived to produce all, will be excluded from the number of all that are, or ever were produced by a Cause. The force, &c. This Argument cannot possibly be avoided, otherwise then by answering that it proceeds upon a false supposition, for the number of produced Causes and Effects being infinite, it is alwayes false, to say all, for still there will be more, and more without end, and one can never reach to all. To this I reply, by demanding whether the Authours of this Opinion intend by this Answer to elude all universal Propositions *de omni*, concerning this number of produced Causes, by denying the supposition of all, by reason of the infinity of the numbers,

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ber, if it were admitted, *exempli gratia*, all effects and causes, that either are now, or ever were, are and were, either Corporal or Spiritual; all men that either are now, or ever were, are and were *animalia rationalia*, all bruits *irrationalia*, &c. If they intend this, they take away the chief ground of humane discourse, by denying all universal Propositions; upon pretence that they proceed upon false suppositions, there being no such thing as *All*; in an infinity of things proceeding one from another, in every particular *species* of them: so, *omnis homo*, *omnis leo*, *omnis arbor*, &c. will be false suppositions, and consequently cannot compose a true proposition; nor will this enumerative argument be of force: *Petrus est animal rationale, & Paulus, & Johannes, et idem de singulis aliis; ergo, omnis homo est animal rationale*, for it may be eluded by saying I deny the supposition, *omnis homo*, all men; because all cannot be

said in an infinite number. If this be their intention, then they are obliged to give a disparity betwixt those forenamed universal propositions, and that proposition which I advanced, of all causes and effects produced; for this being as really and universally true, as the other, if the supposition of *all* be admitted, they must give a solid reason, why *all* causes may not be admitted in this, as well as *all* men, &c. in the other. If they should give this disparity, that *omnis homo*, *all men*, &c. in the foresaid propositions, is an abstract from time and place, and so supposes not to signifie all men, as constituted in time and place, as *omnes causa producta*, *all produced causes* signifies in my propositions; for by *omnis homo est animal rationale*, is no more signified, then that it is the formal intrinsecal notion, or essence of a man, to be a reasonable creature: I answer, that this is not a sufficient disparity, for *omnis res est producibilis*

# God, or nothing: 19

*bilis ab aliqua causâ*, abstracts as much from time and place, and (in this opinion which I impugn) is as much signifying the formal intrinsecal notion of every thing, as *animal rationale* is of *homo*, in as much as *res in genere* is conceived in order to its existency, or actual being: and hence, as from the intrinsecal notion of a man, consisting in *animal rationale*, is rightly inferred this Proposition, That all the men that ever yet were, were *animalia rationalia*, because the same essence is common to all, and every *individuum* of the same kinde, though this second Proposition abstract not from time: so from this Proposition, *omnis res est producibilis ab aliqua causâ*, must be rightly inferred this, All things that ever were yet in actual being, were produced from some cause. Neither will it avail any thing to instance in the infinite series of things in possibility to have an actual being hereafter one from another, by

way of cause and effect without end, wherein it cannot be said, that all effects shall proceed from causes, or all causes shall produce their effects, because in this infinite series, there is no such thing *at all*. This, I say, availes nothing, for the comparison is not rightly instituted betwixt all things which have been, and all things which are in possibility, or may be hereafter, for those causes which have been, or which are past, though they be not now any thing in themselves, yet they remain *in virtute sua*, that is, mediately or immediately, in the works which they have produced, and whereof some now remain, by a continual descent of causation, from their efficient vertue; so that the present effect (*a*) exists by vertue of the cause (*b*), and (*b*) by vertue of (*c*), and (*c*) by vertue of (*d*), &c. so that the effect (*a*) hath so necessary a dependence immediate, or mediate, of every precedent cause in this line of pro-

production, that it could not now be, if any of the precedent causes, how distant soever from it, had not been before it; so that from the actual being of any effect now, the authors of this line of produced causes without end, must confess, that a forcible inference is drawn, of the actual præexistence of all and every cause of the said effect, either immediately or mediately, having a necessary dependence as well of all, as of any one of them, as being a fruit lineally deduced from them all, which cannot possibly be true in an infinite series of produced causes; because in a number infinite, one can never say *all*, as these Authors affirme. But in the instance alledged, of Causes and Effects possible hereafter without end, and so infinite; those which remain, and shall remain without end in the state of possibility, so long as they remain in that state, are a pure nothing, not having any being at all, neither in

22 *Aut Deus; aut nihil.*

themselves, nor in *virtute sua*, there being nothing in actual or virtual being, save onely causes able to produce them; so that they are meerly in *potentia causa*, and no more, neither receiveth the cause any vertue to exist from the effects which it can produce; for that which is yet nothing, cannot give any thing to another thing: whence appears, that the instance objected is defective, there being an evident disparity, betwixt the causes which have been produced heretofore, and the effects which may be produced without end, or time hereafter; for first from the effects which now are existent, by an ascendent successive line, a mediate consequence is forcibly drawn to all the causes, which by connected causalities, have wrought the being of this present effect, which cannot be done possibly in an infinite line, even according to the acknowledgement of these Authors, but contrariwise the actual existence



existence of this present cause, hath no dependence at all, of all or any of the effects, which may successively proceed from it; but can subsist actually by virtue of its causes, though it should never produce any effect at all; and therefore there is no necessary dependence immediate or mediate, betwixt the cause and the effect, as there is betwixt the effect and the cause; whence no forcible inference can be drawne, from the actuality of the cause, to the necessary sequels of all possible effects; and consequently, all the causes that ever have been of this effect, mediate or immediate, are demonstrable by this present effect to have had an actual being: but all effects which may possibly proceed mediately or immediately from this present cause, are not inferred from the actuality of this cause, so that all may be said in the one, but not in the other; the first therefore is finite, but the second is an infinite number.

## 24 *Aut Deus, aut nihil.*

If therefore the instance had been rightly instituted, it should not have been put betwixt the effects which are in possibility to be hereafter, and the precedent causes which already have had their actuall being; but betwixt the effects which may be hereafter, *per posterius & posterius* without end, and the causes which might have been heretofore *per prius & prius* without end. For both these are equally infinite, inexhaustible, indeterminate *in potentia*, and syncategorematical; for as descending from this present effect (*A*,) there shall or may be alwayes effects one after another without end possible; so ascending from the same effect (*a*) there might have been causes one before another without end. But as the instance thus stated concludes nothing, that the produced causes have *de facto* proceeded one from another without end; so supposes it some improducible cause, which might endlessly have produced causes

causes one before another, and before all those which it actually produced. Or if we turn the comparison another way, it should have been proposed, betwixt the causes which have had actual being, and the effects which shall have actual being, wheresoever they are in actual possession of that being, and then the instance had been of force; for as beginning from the cause (A) which now is in actual being, to all the effects hereafter possible, when they are put in actual being, the number will be determinate, exhaustible, and finite; so beginning from the same effects (A) to all the causes which have had actual being in their several precedences, the number will be exhaustible, and determinately finite: the infinity therefore is only conceiveable in the endless succession of possible effects, whereof all can never be in actual possession of their beings *à parte post*, and an infinite precedence of possible causes, whereof

all

all could never have been in actual possession of their beings *à parte ante*, which in effect is nothing else, then to say, that there is some necessary improducible cause, which could have produced causes one in time before another without end, and can produce effects one in time after another without end; and as this improducible cause can produce nothing so late, but he can produce something which shall exist after it; so could it not produce any thing so soon, but it could have produced something which might have existed before it. Whence followes evidently, that there must be alwayes a first and a last, a beginning and an end, a determinate number, and so a proper *all*, of things which either have had, or ever shall have had the exercise of their actual being: for the effects which are actual now, are the last of all actual beings which ever were before, and those of the next ensuing moment

# God, or nothing. 27

ment shall be then the last; and so shall it be without end. Now if actual things have an end, they must have had a beginning; for an infinite actual time without all beginning could never have come to an end, because infinity is that which is without end: seeing then all actual time which hath been heretofore, is come to an end in this present moment, which is the last that hath been, or is actual, it is evident, that it had a beginning. Neither will it avail to say, That it is onely *infinitum à parte ante*, but not *à parte post*; for I answer, that such an actual *infinitum*, is a pure Chymera, that is a thing without an end which hath an end. And it will press as little, to instance in the imaginary moments of precedent time, before any thing was produced by a cause, which were infinite *à parte ante*, and yet came to an end *à parte post*, when things were first caused: For I answer that those moments were pure nothings,

28 *Aut Deus, aut nihil.*

nothings, and mere fictitious or false concepts of our understanding; for time is nothing but either the measure of mutable things, or rather the mutability or mutation it self: (as I shall declare hereafter) when therefore it is supposed that no mutable thing is in actual being, it is impossible to conceive truly that there is any time; for those fained moments are nothing else, then that improducible, and immutable cause, which hath power to produce something actual and mutable, which should have bin before all other things which he hath caused, as the imaginary moments possible to be hereafter, are nothing save the same cause, either alone or with other causes which can produce mutable effects after all those which shall have been actually produced; by reason therefore that this power of the first cause is without beginning or ending, as being wholly immutable, and so not measurable by  
time,

time, we concept that time possible in precedency, and of futurity, is composed of successive moments.

Thus therefore having passed through these occurring difficulties, I return to my former Argument, and press it thus: All the effects which now are in actual being (even according to the adverse opinion) have a necessary dependance, mediate or immediate, of all the causes which have preceded them in the line of their causation; therefore it is a truth and a proper expression to say, that *all* those causes have concurred mediately or immediately to these present effects; but it is impossible that all those precedent causes should be produced by a cause, for then they would be *all*, and not *all*, as I have already proved: therefore amongst the causes which in the line of causation have concurred immediately or mediately to these present effects, there must be at least some one which is a producing

cing only, and not a produced cause, which is my fifth Proposition.

Hitherto I have only labor'd to evince, that such beings as are subject to continual generation, and corruption, and which by a line of Succession follow one another, in production and defition, must have had some improducible cause: some difficulty may yet remain in these greater and more solid parts of this Universe, as the Earth, Water, Air, Heaven, Sun, Moon, Stars, &c. for these still remaining (so far as we can judge by our experience) in that main substantial being which they ever had, may occasion a difficulty how they came to be. Forasmuch therefore as touches this present proposition, either it must be said, that they are of themselves, and never had any producing cause, and then my present proposition is in part asserted, that amongst all actual beings there must be improducible causes: or that they were produced



duced by causes successive one to another, and all caused, which I have already confuted: or that they are caused by a simultaneous infinity of causes one above another, and one producing another without end, and all actually and eternally existent, which I have *fortiori*, evinced to be false, by my former Arguments, against infinite successive causes; for it would be both an *actum infinitum*, and as hard to understand or believe, as a first improducible cause; and it would destroy it self by being as impossible, as that of succeeding causes, &c. Neither will the instance of infinite divisible parts less, and less without end, *in continuo*, make a parity with *infinitum actum*. For first, that opinion is not certain: and secondly, if it be true, I answer, that parts whilst they are *in continuo*, are onely potential, and not actual parts, no nor *entia acta*; for nothing is an actual being but the *totum* it self, and when

when that is divided, of one *totum* or whole thing, there is made two, and if each of them be divided, they become two less *totums*, and so without end by each division, a new *totum* will begin to be, which was onely *in potentia* before; for so long as they are *in continuo*, they are the *continuum* without any beginning, ending, term, or determination, save onely the terms of the whole *continuum*; so that it is impossible to say the part (*a*) is of this determinate length, bredth, or profundity, so long as it remains *in continuo*, for it hath nothing to terminate it, till it come to the utmost superficies or point of the *continuum*. And seeing every actual being must be determinate, and no indeterminate thing can be *ens actus*, there will be nothing actual *in continuo*, save the *totum* it self, or the *continuum*, because that onely is *ens determinatum*, having its fixed and determinate limits: so that in every *continuo*, there is onely  
 one

## God, or nothing: 133

one actual thing, containing *in potentia*, many things, which by actual division may become *acta* less *continuum* then that is wherein they are contained; and so every *continuum* contained *in potentia* in a greater, will be less then its continent, when it becomes a *continuum* by a new division, and this without end; there being then no actual determination of different parts *in continuo*, there can be no actual distinction of them; and if no distinction, no actual number; and if no actual number, there can be no actual infinity, or *infinitum actu*.

Thus I have proved my fifth Proposition, and have been something prolix in it, because it contains the mainest difficulty of the whole deduction.

Against the three last precedent propositions may be objected; that there appears no contradiction, in constituting the essence of something not absolutely

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34 *Aut Deus, aut nihil.*

solutely and alwayes necessary, but yet having a necessary and essential connection with such a determinate term of time; *v. g.* that it have an essence requiring necessarily to begin its actual being in the determinate instant (*A*), and to continue till the determinate instant (*G*), and the same is of so many determinate hours, dayes, moneths, years, &c. and this without any cause at all, but of its particular essence, or of it self: whence will follow, that one thing may begin to be actually in such a term of time, and then cease to be; and after many revolutions of time another thing may begin, and desist from being, in another discontinued portion of time, &c. So that a time may be given wherein there was nothing at all, nor shall be any thing, though there be something now in actual being. I answer, that such an essence as this, implies a manifest contradiction, in our present supposition,

# God, or nothing? 35

tion, of no being at all: for supposing once that there be nothing at all, it cannot be supposed, that there are any determinate instants, or parts of time, to which that being can have any necessary and essential relation; for those instants, or parts, must be something; and so this objection suppose *nothing at all to be*, and yet *something to be*, which is a clear contradiction. And hence also follows, that it is as clear a contradiction as the former, to affirm, that any thing essentially annexed to a determinate space of time, should be of it self *ab eterno*; for that limited eternity must be presupposed to be actually, before you suppose that any thing can be actually and essentially annexed to it; seeing the actuality of no being can be essentially annexed to that *which is nothing actually*; for then something should depend of nothing: now I subsume, but it is impossible to conceive that pretended not beginning, or eter-

36 *Aut Deus, aut nihil.*

nal determinate time designed in the objections to be presupposed as actually existing, before that being commensured essentially to that forenamed space of time, *ergo*. This *Minor* I prove because it is wholly impossible to conceive any actual durance of time, whether eternal or not eternal, whether infinite or finite, before we conceive something actually existent, which in a second sign of *posteriority of Nature*, we conceive measured by such a determinate space of time; for no part of time whatsoever, can have any other proper notion (if it be any reality distinct from the thing which dures) then to be an effect, and (as many think) consequently an effect of that which dures by it; both which suppose either the thing effected to be its subject, or the thing effecting it to be its cause; and by consequence, that thing to be in priority, and this in posteriority of nature, in relation to it: whence it follows,

lows, according to the common strain of Philosophers, that it can have no essential dependence of it in its actual being, for what is supposed to be actually, before the actual being of another thing, cannot essentially depend in its actual being upon that before which it is supposed to be actually.

Secondly, seeing that that which this objection pretends to be eternal, or *ab eterno*, must have an essential relation to this or that determinate actual space of time, for which alone, and for no other, it hath a necessary being of it self, and that ended ceases of it self to be any longer, I cannot conceive such an essence without a manifest contradiction; for it is impossible to conceive any thing to have an essential relation to be so soon, or in such a priority of time, that no time can be conceived to be possible before it, if it continue only for a determinate space of successive time, and then as it existed (in this sup-

position) of it self *ab eterno*, so of it self it ceases to be in this or that determinate instant of time. For in this supposition, that determinate instant will terminate a time which is determinately finite; therefore from that instant ascending, one may attain to the first instant of that time; and so that time will have a final and last instant, and consequently be finite, and not eternal, wherein no first instant is to be found. Seeing therefore (as we shall see hereafter) successive eternity is but a meer possible indetermination of one priority conceived before another, and that no indeterminate thing so long as it remains indeterminate, or as such, can possibly be, or ever have been *actu*, an actual being; it is also impossible to conceive such an indeterminate successive eternity, to be any actual thing in it self, or any thing else, save the necessary and immutable power of some cause which can produce nothing  
 so



so soon, but it could have produced something, which might have been before whatsoever it hath actually produced; and if it had produced any thing before that, it could yet have produced another thing which would have been, and so *in infinitum*, without all term or limit.

The sixth Proposition.

*Whatsoever is an actual being essentially, must be of it self, that is, independent of any cause different from it.*

*Proof.*

**T**HIS Proposition is already proved, for the essence of a thing is really the thing it self, as is evident; if therefore any thing exist actually from, or of its essence, it must exist actually from, or of it self: now every thing which is essentially an actual being, exists actually of its own essence; there-

40 *Aut Deus, aut nihil.*

fore every thing which is essentially an actual being, exists actually of it self. If it should be instanced, that supposing an inevitable necessity of all things, all things would essentially be actual beings for that measure of time wherein they are, and yet they would not be of themselves, but from their determinate causes unavoidably producing them; I answer, that this necessity (were there any such) proceeds not from the essence of the effect, but from the determination of the cause; for therefore only the effect is necessary, because the cause cannot but produce it: for the effect being purely nothing before it is produced, cannot possibly necessitate the cause to produce it; for to necessitate any thing, is to do some thing, but *nothing can do nothing*: it is not therefore the essence of the effect to be actually in such a space of time, but rather the essence of the cause to produce such an effect in such a time. So that even this  
false

false supposition admitted, whatsoever is an actual being essentially, must be of it self; for the supposed inevitable necessity of all things is onely extrinsecal from the cause, and so not essential, or intrinsecal to the thing in actual being: neither indeed can either the beginning to be, or perseverance in being for such a determinate time onely, be essential to any thing; for time being nothing but a measure of mutability, or rather mutability it self, (as we shall see hereafter) whatsoever is essentially in or for such a determinate space of time, will be in time, and not in time, for that whole space wherein it is supposed to be: in time, as is supposed; and yet not in time, for whatsoever it is essentially it is immutably, for nothing can change its essence: To say therefore, that any thing can be essentially for, or in such a determinate time, is to affirm that it is mutable whilst it is not mutable, and necessary whilst it is not necessary,

42 *Aut Deus, aut nihil.*

fary, which is a plain contradiction. Nay farther, it is to affirm, that such a being is *tota simul*, because it cannot but be for such a time, and yet not *tota simul*, but by succeeding parts, because it is in time, which is another contradiction.

The seventh Proposition.

*No actual being that is superfluous, defective, inordinate, absurd, or disform from the rule of right Reason, can be essentially necessary, or of it self.*

*Proof.*

**F**OR what necessary can there be of absurdities or defects, &c. seeing their not being is better then their being, and the works of nature are better without them then with them? For if any thing absurd and contrary to reason could be essentially necessary, and of it self, and all things must proceed from

from that being which is essentially necessary, and of it self, as is above proved, then all things which have a being must be absurd and contrary to reason. But it is evident that all things which have a being are not absurd and contrary to reason, *ergo*. The *Minor* is evident by the Reasonableness, Order, Beauty, Perfection, Connection, and Symmetry which are found in those things which we experience to be. The *Major* I prove, for nothing can give that which it hath not it self; therefore if that which gives, that is, produces all things, be absurd and contrary to reason, it cannot give, that is, produce any thing which is perfect and according to reason. For if that which is contrary to reason could work according to reason, (and whatsoever gives or produces any thing which is according to reason, must work according to reason) then that which is contrary to reason will be according to reason; for whatsoever

# 44 *Aut Deus, aut nihil.*

soever works according to reason, must participate of reason, and so be according to reason. Again, whatsoever is, there must be some reason why it is: But there can be no reason, why any thing which is contrary to reason should be, *ergo*. The *Minor* is evident, for if there were reason for it, it could not be contrary to reason, unless you make the same thing to be according to reason and contrary to reason. I prove the *Major*, for if any thing could be without any reason why it is, then any one may put what he pleaseth to be, or not to be, without any reason: and so all humane discourse will be frustrated, which gives reasons for what it affirms, and deduceth all things from reason. But of this more hereafter.

The eighth Proposition.

*No Actual Being, which is obnoxious to  
Deordinations and Absurdities, can be  
essentially necessary, or of it self.*

*Proof.*

**S**Eeing no absurdity can be essentially necessary, as is proved, nothing which can be subject to any absurdity can be essentially necessary; for whatsoever actual being is essentially necessary, must always be necessary; but that which is subject to such deviations, may at some time not be necessary; for it may happen that it falls into some of those absurdities to which it is obnoxious, and then it becomes absurd and inordinate; but nothing which is absurd can be essentially necessary: seeing therefore every actual being essentially necessary excludes all absurdities, nothing which can be absurd, can be an actual being essentially necessary.

The

## The ninth Proposition.

*Nothing can be an actual being essentially,  
and of it self, which is not indued with  
the light of Reason.*

*Proof.*

**W**Hatsoever is an actual being essentially, must essentially exclude all disorders and absurdities, as is proved in the two former Propositions, but nothing save that which is indued with the light of reason, can essentially exclude all disorders and absurdities, *ergo*. I prove the *affirm*: whatsoever excludes essentially all disorders and absurdities, must have something essentially repugnant to all disorders and absurdities; this is evident. But nothing is essentially repugnant to all disorders and absurdities, save the light of reason; Therefore, whatsoever hath not the light of reason excludes



cludes not essentially all disorders and absurdities. I prove the *Minor*.

Therefore onely is any thing disordered and absurd, because it is contrary or difform to the light of reason; therefore onely the light of reason is essentially repugnant to all disorders and absurdities. The antecedent is evident; for why is any thing disordered or absurd, then because it is otherwise then reason dictates it should be? I prove the consequence, for if disorder be nothing save a repugnancy to the light of reason, then nothing but the light of reason is essentially repugnant to all disorders.

I will give force and light to this Argument, by propounding it in another manner, thus. Whatsoever is not capable of it self, to govern and direct it self perfectly according to the rule of reason, cannot of it self preserve it self from all inconveniences, disorders, and absurdities, this is evident.

48 *Aut Deus, aut nihil.*

dent. But whatsoever hath not the light of reason, cannot of it self govern it self perfectly according to the rule of reason, *ergo*. The *Minor* is clear, for who can possibly conceive, that that which hath no knowledge nor understanding of it self, which neither knows whether it be good or bad, right or wrong, well or ill, orderly or disorderly, according or contrary to reason, nay, nor whether there be any such thing as reason or no, should be capable to govern perfectly it self of it self, according to the rule of reason? Thus were the Sun constituted so far from the Earth, that it could neither heat nor enlighten it; or so near, that it blinded all who saw it, and burnt up all before it; or that the Earth were removed so far off, or near to the Sun, that the same inconveniences and disorders followed; if neither any Tree ever bore fruit, nor any sensible Creature exercised any faculty of his senses; if all bodies were weak,

# God, or nothing: 49

weak, feeble, diseased, and deformed; if all things were, put out of order, place, time, number, weight, measure, proportion, beauty, fill'd with nothing but horrid disorders, defects, deformities, disproportions, absurdities, fooleries, (which certainly, if we respect only the course of Nature, are main transgressions against the rule of Reason, foul blos upon the beauty of creatures, and prodigious monsters in the progress of natural causes) yet whatsoever had not the light of reason, could neither prevent them, nor resent them, nor redress them of, and by itself, or by any thing included essentially in the actuality of its being, but every thing would actually exist as before, if some external cause did not destroy them, which could not be, if they were essentially actual beings, as is already proved.

It will be said this Argument proves too much, and so in effect proves just

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nothing:

nothing: for it concludes not onely, that actual beings devoid of the light of reason cannot free themselves from all disorders and defects, but that they can free themselves from none at all; for if the light of reason be onely that which is essentially repugnant to disorders, they will have nothing essentially repugnant to any disorder whatsoever, and so will be exposed to all, and unable to preserve themselves from any one. Which notwithstanding appears manifestly false, to all who cast an eye upon the constant Symmetry, Splendor, and Proportion of this Universe, and the specious progress of natural causes and effects; which though wholly empty of the light of reason, digest all things conformably to the rule of reason. I answer, that the Argument contends not, that actual beings not enriched with the use of reason, cannot conform themselves to the prescript of reason in many things, but  
that

that they cannot effect it of themselves in all things, as not retaining any thing essentially repugnant to all inconveniences (which may be cast upon them) in the actuality of their beings; for if they had any such perfection, they could not possibly be obnoxious to the least disorder: that conformity therefore which they have to reason, and the resistance to many accidents of disorder thwarting the laws of reason, they enjoy not from themselves; but from reason, and that onely so far as they flow from reason, and are certain particles and participations of reason. That this may be understood, I divide reason into two branches; the one active, the other passive; the one working, the other wrought; the one conceiving, the other expressing what it conceives; the one may be termed not unfactly *Ratio ratiocinans*, *Reason reasoning*; the other, *Ratio ratiocinata*, *Reason reasoned*. Thus the Idea of some cu-

rious and sumptuous building framed in the minde of a skilful Architect, is *Reason reasoning*; that is, contriving, working, acting, ordering, digesting, the perfect proportion of that building within it self. But the building it self accomplished according to the Idea, will be *Ratio, ratiocinata, Reason reasoned*, that is, wrought, expressed, formed, and framed according to the thoughts of that Idea. Thus a learned person composes a Treatise both according to the sense and words, by his inward thoughts, which are *Reason reasoning*; and after couches it in writing, which is *Reason reasoned*; and though who-soever contemplates with a considerate eye, the strength and art of reason, comprised in such expressions, yet he plainly discovers that neither the parts of the Building, nor the words of the Treatise had it from themselves, but from a working and active reason expressing it self in them: and though  
those

those parts and words, so long as they remain conform to that reason which framed them, cannot swerve from reason, nor fall into disorder, or nonsense, yet they contain nothing in their actual beings which essentially repugns against the disordering and depraving them, but would retain them no less being dissipated and disordered, then they did before. And if the *reason* from whence they issued were so vigorous and active, that it constituted them in so firm a consistency of that posture and order, which it imprinted upon them, that no natural cause should have power to deface or sully it; yet even that immobility would disclose it self to a piercing eye, no more to proceed from it, then it proceeded from it self. And though such a constant beauty and *decorum* could not be interess'd by the force of nature, or disturbed in its course; yet that touches not the essential, but the natural, or well-being of

54. *Aut Deus, aut nihil.*

it; not that it would lose its being, were it put in some disorder, but that nothing in nature is impowered to disorder it.

Thus though the carriere of the Sun and Heavens finde no obstacle or *remora* in nature, yet were they curbed in their full speed, they would not in a moment fall to nothing.

By this distinction thus illustrated, (whereon I will more insist hereafter) it is evidenced, that the light of reason is onely essentially opposed to all inconveniences and deordinations; and that whensoever that which is not illustrated with this active light, preserves it self from any of them, it proceeds not originally, or essentially, from it, but from that participation of passive reason, which the active hath infused into it.

Seeing therefore that all the beauty and *decorum* of irrational beings, is onely a copy drawn by the alive hand  
of



of Reason, *the ninth Proposition remains evident, That nothing can be an actual being essentially, and of it self, which is not indued with the light of Reason.*

Hence therefore followes first, the implicancy of that old, deceased, buried, rotten, and consumed Error, now lately raked out of the ashes of Heathenish Ignorance, and Poetical Fictions, That there is an universal Matter, infinite in extent, and eternall in duration, without beginning or ending, whose being is essentially actual, and of it self, incapable of being produced, or destroyed by any cause whatsoever. For seeing this supposed matter is not indued essentially with the actual light of reason, nay, is so far from it, that it is in the least capacity of all other things, to preserve it self from disorders, as being nothing but a compact of disorders, a chaos of confusion, and a being so rude and deformed, that were not there some in-

telligent cause to order and digest it in-  
 to some form and fashion, it would  
 remain the most absurd of all beings,  
 and the very next to nothing; having,  
 as they coin it, all things in power or  
 possibility, and yet being nothing of  
 any thing which it hath. In a word,  
 it is no better, when these new inven-  
 tors have made the best of it, then all  
 things in disorder: it is the Mirror of  
 misrule, the Embrio of beings, the  
 World in a lump, Heaven and Earth  
 in mortar; and the first edition of Ab-  
 surdities written in the large volumes  
 of infinity. For whether they make  
 it consist of Atomes, as the Ancients  
 did, or of different Spirits, as others  
 lately have conceited, it is nothing but  
 infinite confused mixtures both of the  
 one and the other, till brought into  
 some fixed posture and proportion,  
 some determinate being is drawn out  
 of it. Is it then possible to conceive,  
 that such an ear alliance to nothing, as  
 this

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this *Matter* is, should arrive to that infinite height of perfection, to be essentially an actual being, of, and from it self? Were it of it self, it must be essentially and absolutely necessary, as is proved; but what absolute necessity is there of absurdities and disorders? Were it wholly necessary, it could admit of no change or alteration; for whatsoever is essentially necessary, is, and must be always, what ever it was: but this supposed *Matter* is, and ever was, and will be subject to infinite alterations, putting on perpetually new forms, postures, proportions, mixtures, distances, approximations, places, figures, correspondences, conjunctions, separations, unities, divisions, continuations, contiguities, and a thousand more, so that it is constant in nothing but inconstancy; were it an actual being essentially, it must be a rule of rectitude to it self, and so be essential rectitude, excluding all disorders; when

when this *Matter* has disorder coeternal with it, and coessential to it. How came it alone of it self to give being to it self, when of it self alone it can give a determinate being to nothing else, but onely suffer other active and efficient causes, to make out of it, determinate beings?

Let therefore the authors of this most pernicious and Antichristian novelty, either prove that this infinite, eternal, and uncreated matter, had from all eternity a most perfect actual light and use of understanding, to rectifie it self according to the perfect rule of reason; or confess that it must essentially depend in the actuality of its being, of some cause indued with such a light: or all the world will see that they speak against reason, and deceive themselves, and others, by a vain and senseless fiction.

Hence also it followes evidently against *Aristotle*, that the whole *Moles*,

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or fabrick of this visible World, could not be of it self, or essentially, an actual being, without any cause; for neither the Earth, whereof all inferior visible things are naturally composed, nor the other Elements, nor the spacious body of the Heavens, nor that glory of the Sun, nor that beauty of the Moon, nor that lustre of the Stars, nor that admirable composition and proportion of the bodies of Men and Beasts (seeing they are so far from possessing the light of Reason, that have neither sense nor life: nor Plants and Trees, though they have some degree of life) nor Beasts, Birds, and Fish, though they have life and sense, because none of these have the light of Reason: no nor the Souls of men, nor the Angels themselves, though indued with the light of Reason and Understanding, can possibly have been essentially actual beings, and from themselves; for the actual light of reason which

which they have, is not essential, but accidental to their beings; because, as appears in Infants, they can be actually, without the actual use of reason. All therefore that is essentially included in the actual being of an Angel, or humane Soul, is to be a power, or virtue, able to use reason and understanding, so that they are truly conceived to be, before they are conceived to exercise reason: wherefore, they can be actually no more of themselves, then any other thing which hath no such power, for it is not the power to use reason, but the actual use of reason, which enables any thing to exclude essentially all disorders, and defects against reason from it self. Seeing therefore Men and Angels must be supposed to be actually, before they can be supposed to produce any act of reason, (for the being of all causes must be presupposed to the production of their effects, for nothing can produce nothing) their beings

beings include not essentially the actual use of reason, and so cannot essentially exclude all deviations and deordinations from reason, which can be only effected by an act of reason.

Hence also follows, the actual use of Reason, or the acts of Reason, as they are experienced and actuated amongst men, (and the same is of Angels) cannot be of themselves, or essentially necessary, both because they presuppose the beings of Men and Angels, as their producing cause; as also, because such acts of reason being limited and finite, though they may essentially exclude some disorders, yet they are still subject to a thousand, or rather infinite others, which by reason of their narrowness and shallowness, they can neither foresee, nor prevent, nor remedy. These truths therefore being settled, I come to the tenth Proposition.

**The tenth Proposition.**

*Onely Actual Reason, in its full perfection and latitude, that is, Reason it self, is an actual being essentially necessary.*

*Proof.*

**T**HIS Proposition follows evidently from the precedent; for seeing there is now, ever was, and shall be something in actual being, and that this could not be, unless there had been alwayes some thing, or things, essentiall necessary; and that nothing frustrate, disordered, defective, or absurd, actually, or possibly, can be a necessary actual being: and that whatsoever hath not the light of reason, actually exercised, nay, even acts of reason limited and imperfect, cannot essentially exclude all disorders and inconveniences, &c. from their actual beings; it follows



lows inevitably, that actual reason in its full perfection, or reason it self, and that onely, is an actual being essentially necessary: which Argument may be thus framed by way of resolution. If actual reason it self, or in its full perfection, be not essentially a necessary actual being, all other things would be subject to disorder; if all were subject to disorder, nothing could be essentially necessary; if nothing were necessary, nothing could have been which is not essentially necessary; that supposed, no actual being could be now; but it is most manifest that there is now some actual being, therefore from the first to the last, Reason it self, must be essentially a necessary actual being.

Or yet more briefly and clearly thus: Something must be essentially necessary, as is proved in the fourth Proposition; but nothing (as is proved in the following Propositions) which is not reason it self, or in its full perfection, can

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can be essentially necessary; therefore  
only reason it self in its full perfecti-  
on is essentially necessary.

The eleventh Proposition.

*Only Actual Reason in its full perfection,  
or Reason it self, is essentially an actual  
being of it self.*

*Proof.*

**T**Hough I use only in these and  
the former Propositions the word  
*Actual Reason*, because it is the fittest  
in our language to express my mean-  
ing, yet I take indifferently for Syno-  
noma's, or words of the same signifi-  
cation, *Actual Reason*, *Understanding*,  
*Knowledge*, *Wisdom*, and the like; all  
being in reality the same thing: this  
premised, I prove the Proposition.

This Proposition is manifest: first,  
from the precedent and sixth Proposi-  
tion,

tion; wherein is proved, that whatsoever is an actual being essentially necessary, is of it self. Secondly, from the Arguments for proof of the former Proposition. Thirdly, *a priori*, or from the very nature of Reason it self, thus: That must necessarily be of it self, which must be, and cannot possibly be conceived to be from any thing else: But reason it self must be, as is proved from the former Proposition, and cannot possibly be conceived to be from any thing else; Ergo, &c. The *Major* is most evident; the first part of the *Minor* is already proved. I prove the second part of the *Minor*. If reason it self could possibly be conceived to be from any thing else, that from which it is conceived to be, must be either wholly devoid of reason, or indued with imperfect reason; or reason it self in its full perfection. It cannot be from reason it self, as from any thing distinct from it self. For reason it self cannot

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cannot be any thing but what it is, to wit, reason it self. Neither can it proceed from imperfect reason; for no cause can totally produce any thing perfecter then it self; for nothing can give that to another which it hath not it self: now it is evident, that reason in its full perfection, is perfecter then imperfect reason. Neither can it be produced, by any thing devold of reason, for the same reason; for that which is reason it self, is more perfect (according to all Philosophers) then that which hath in it no reason at all, and the reason hereof is evident; for that which essentially excludes all imperfections, as is already proved, reason it self does, must be more perfect then that which excludes them not, as is above demonstrated; that nothing devold of the light of reason can exclude them all essentially; therefore reason in its full perfection must be of it self. Truly, I prove the said Proposition

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position by another Argument; *apert*,  
in this manner. Whatsoever hath in  
it self all things essentially required to  
be of it self, must necessarily be of it  
self; this is evident. But reason in its  
full perfection, hath all things essenti-  
ally required to be of it self, viz. it self;  
Therefore it is of it self. I prove the  
*Axiom.* All that can be conceived to  
be essentially required for any thing  
to be of it self, is, that it self be a  
most perfect actual rule of Rectitude  
to it self; for this is to be its owne  
rule, its owne measure, its owne direc-  
tion, its owne rectitude, light, know-  
ledge, life, being, existency; for were  
such a being from any thing save it self,  
that from which it proceeded, as from  
a different cause, would be the rule of  
rectitude and perfection to it, and not  
it self to it self; for the total cause  
must always be the rule and measure of  
all the perfections which are in the  
effect; for whatsoever is in the effect,

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must have been precedently in the  
cause, for nothing can give that which it  
~~has not~~ whatever, therefore is a  
most perfect actual rule and measure to  
it self, must be equivalently as much to  
it self, as if it were its own cause, and  
be as truly and adequately of it self, as  
other things are from their total causes:  
so that if it have no other rule, nor  
measure of rectitude and perfection  
then it self; it can have no cause at all  
different from it self; and so must have  
its actual being essentially of it self.  
Now I suppose, but actual reason in  
its full perfection, is a most perfect  
actual rule of rectitude to it self;  
therefore actual reason in its full per-  
fection, is an actual being essentially of  
it self. The consequence is clear. I  
prove the *Minor*. Actual reason is self-  
or in its full perfection, is a most per-  
fect actual understanding and compre-  
hension of it self; it is, *Intellectus est seipsum*  
*Intellectio est seipsum* *Aut actualis understanding*

of actual understanding: it is *Cognitio cognitionis*, a knowledge of knowledge. For it would not be reason and understanding in its full perfection, if it were ignorant of any thing, and if it know not it self, it must be ignorant of something, nay, of the best of all things. Seeing therefore it is a most perfect knowledge of it self, it is a guide and rule unto it self; and being reason it self, which is the original rule of all rectitude, it must be a most perfect rule of rectitude to it self; and so must be its own rectitude, and rectitude it self; for it is impossible to conceive, that reason it self either should be contrary to reason, or admit of any thing in it self contrary to reason; for then reason should not be reason. And thus I have made way to the twelfth and last Proposition.

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**The twelfth Proposition.**

*Reason it self, being essentially necessary,  
and of it self, is God.*

**Proof.**

**T**His Proposition is clear, *ex ter-  
minis*, by the bare notion of the  
terms wherein it is propounded; for  
the true God was never conceived by  
any who had a real notion of him, to  
be any thing, save actual Intellection,  
or Reason it self, essentially necessary  
and of it self; an essential rule of Re-  
ctitude to it self; a most clear compre-  
hensive Knowledge of it self, or neces-  
sary exclusion of all defects and deformi-  
ties from it self, the Quintessence  
of all true perfection within it self, and  
the source of all beings without it self.  
Seeing therefore I have evidently pro-  
ved in the former Propositions, that  
there



## God, or nothing. 75

there is now something in actual being; and thence evidently deduced, the necessity of the actual being of Reason it self, beautified with all these admirable perfections. I have made evident, what I intended and promised in the Title of this small Treatise, that there is a God: and therefore may safely conclude, there is either **A GOD** OR **NOTHING**; but it is evident there is something, therefore it is evident there is **A GOD**. From this truth that God is reason it self, or in its full perfection, I draw these ensuing Corollaries, or Deductions, of the Attributes of God.

### The first Attribute.

#### *The Unity of God.*

**S**Eeing God is Reason it self, that is, all the perfections of Reason summed up and identified in one and the

# 71 *Ans Deus, unum nihil.*

Since actual being, it is impossible to  
conceive, that there should be more  
than one God, when one is necessary.

The Second Attribute.

*God is indivisible.*  
In the Title, that I have put, that  
there is a God: and therefore may I say

**V**hensoever is divisible may  
be divided into parts, as is  
clear; but Reason it self cannot be di-  
vided into parts: for whensoever any  
whole is divided into parts, the whole  
is destroyed; but Reason it self cannot  
be destroyed, for it is essentially a ne-  
cessary actual being, which cannot but  
be, as is proved; therefore God, being  
Reason it self, is not divisible.

*The Trinity of God.*  
Being God is Reason it self, that  
all the perfections of Reason are  
The

God; or nothing.

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The third Attribute.

*The Spirituality of God.*

**G**od is Reason it self; therefore he essentially excludes all things which are obnoxious to disorders, or deviations from Reason: but every corporeal substance is of it self obnoxious to such defects, as is proved; therefore God is no corporeal substance; therefore he is onely spiritual.

The fourth Attribute.

*The Simplicity of Gods being.*

**G**od is Reason it self; Reason it self is reason in abstracto; things abstracted are simple essences, or beings, without all concretion or composition; therefore God is most simple and pure in his being, without all com-  
mixture

## 74. *Aut Deus, aut nihil.*

mixture or composition of parts, essential or integral; for, had he any parts, those parts could be nothing but different Reasons; for Reason can consist of nothing but Reason; and then he would be a compound of different Reasons, and not Reason it self; which is a most simple identity, without all composition of different things united together, but not identified, in one imperfect compound.

### *The fifth Attribute.*

#### *The Ubiquity of God.*

**A**LL things must proceed immediately from Reason it self; therefore Reason it self must be in all things, for nothing can produce any thing immediately, if it be distant from that thing which it produces; for if it be distant, it must work by some efficient vertue; or quality, issuing from it through

through that distance, and then it works not *immediately*, but by interjection of that diffused vertue, which opely works *immediately*: if therefore all things must proceed from Reason it self *immediately*, Reason it self can be distant from nothing, and because it cannot in it self be contiguous to any thing, by reason that it hath no corporeal quantity to fill any place, it must be in the very essence of the thing which it produces: if therefore that which it produces be a corporeal thing and actually fill any place, because Reason is in that thing, it is said truly to be in that place, where that corporeal thing is, and consequently to be every where, that is, in all real places, where any thing capable of it self to be in a place is collocated. The difficulty is in the first Proposition: *viz.* That all things must proceed immediately from Reason it self. This I prove. Every thing must proceed from Reason

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Reason it self, therefore every thing must proceed immediately from Reason it self. The antecedent is already proved: I prove the consequence. Whatsoever proceeds from Reason it self cannot contain anything contrary to Reason, for Reason it self can do nothing contrary to Reason, for so Reason should be contrary to Reason, and then it would not be Reason; but whatsoever proceeds not immediately from Reason it self, may contain something contrary to Reason; therefore whatsoever proceeds from Reason it self, must proceed immediately from Reason it self. I prove the *consequent*. Whatsoever proceeds totally and adequately from any other immediate cause then Reason it self, may contain something (viz. in its actual being, at least according to some circumstance or other) which is contrary to Reason; therefore nothing can proceed totally from any immediate cause, save Reason

Reason

it

it self, if all things proceed from Reason it self, and nothing which proceeds from Reason it self, can contain any thing contrary to Reason, as is now proved. That whatsoever proceeds totally and adequately from any immediate cause save Reason it self, may contain something contrary to Reason, is already made evident: for seeing all such causes are subject to Ignorance, and devoid of infallible directive Knowledge of all circumstances which may occur in the immediate total production of such effects, they are obnoxious to fall into some imprudent and unprovident proceeding in the production of them, left wholly to themselves: Seeing therefore all things must proceed from Reason it self, lest this imprudence committed in the production of any effect should be ascribed to Reason it self; as an effect to its cause, it is plainly necessary that all other causes (I speak of

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78 *Aut Deus, aut nihil.*

necessary, not free causes, of which we shall treat hereafter) should be immediately directed, and preserved from such errors and deviations, by the infallible, all-seeing Wisdom, and Providence of Reason it self; so that all circumstances and things considered, and compared together, there will be no real being, produced contrary to reason, or sullied with the least disorder. Now this direction of reason it self, seeing it must reach to all, and every the least action of all necessary causes, is the immediate influence and concurrence of reason it self into every effect; for it contains a decree of reason it self, that such effects be actually produced in such determinate circumstances, and by means of such causes: for it is not possible to conceive the concurrence of God, to be any thing, save reason it self effectually decreeing, and defining the actual being of all things which ever were, are, or shall be, in their



their fit circumstances, all things and occurrences considered, as I shall hereafter make manifest. Thus therefore I have proved, that reason it self produces immediately all things, and so is in all things; and consequently by reason that all places are filled with these things, in which reason it self is, by means of them it is in all places; and if corporal thing could be in infinite places, it would also be in infinite places, which is the proper notion of Gods Ubiquity: for that is nothing else, then that it is impossible that any place should be, in which God is not. And I adde farther, that if place, or ubication, be any thing distinct from the thing which is in place, that God is in that also, for the same reasons, as he is in all other things, not as locally contained immediately in these places, but as being the immediate producing cause of those realities, or modifications, which are called places, or ubies, and

this

this presence of God in all things is to be considered for the first instant, or priority of Nature, (as the School speaks) which respects the actual being of every thing in it self, or before it be considered in time and place, so that it is not a local, but a causal presence, not including place, but yet excluding local distance from any thing which supposes place.

*The sixth Attribute.*

*The Eternity of God.*

**E**ternity may be taken either improperly, for a succession of time without beginning or ending, and in this sense, God is not in himself eternal, because he hath no change of being, of parts, or properties, which may succeed one to another, and be measured by time: so that according to this improper acception, he can only be

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he said *Denominative*, or by way of denomination, (supposing that any changeable beings have been alwayes, or in all times, without beginning) to be in all times, or eternally by succession, because he hath (if this supposition were true) been in all those beings which have been from successive eternity; no otherwise then I have declared in the former Attribute, that he is said to be in local and divisible places. Or eternity is taken properly, for an unsuccessive, and simultaneous, or indivisible durance, whereby God at once is what he is totally, and unchangeably; so that as he sums up all perfections in his indivisible being, so he sums up all instants and parts of time, in one indivisible point of his eternal durance. God therefore being reason it self, and that being essentially a necessary actual being, as is proved, it is impossible that he should ever be truly conceived, either not to be, or to

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be any thing but what he is ; and consequently in himself, and according to his essence he is most properly eternal.

### *The seventh Attribute.*

#### *The Omniscieny of God.*

**R** Eason it self can be ignorant of nothing ; for were it ignorant of any thing, in that whereof it is ignorant, it might admit, or do something contrary to reason, as not being an essential rule of rectitude to it self, in such things whereof it is ignorant ; for if it knew them not, it could not determine, whether they were conformable to reason or no ; but reason it self can neither admit into it self, nor do any thing contrary to reason, for then *Reason should not be reason, Ergo, &c.*

The

## The eighth Attribute.

*Of Gods Omnipotency.*

**W**Hatsoever hath, or can have any finite being, must be squared according to reason; therefore it must be a participation, or expression of the first reason; therefore it must proceed from the first reason, or reason it self; therefore God being Reason it self, whatsoever hath, or can have a being must proceed from God; therefore God is Omnipotent. Or thus. It is reason that whatsoever reason it self judges to be put in actual being, should be put in actual being; this is clear: but whensoever it is reason (all things considered) that any thing should be done, that is to be done; therefore whensoever reason it self judges that any thing should be put in actual being, it is to be put in actual being; therefore it cannot but

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be,

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be, then when reason judges it should be; therefore reason it self, which is God, is Omnipotent, seeing every thing must be done, which he judges to be done. The difficulty will be in this *Minor*, viz. *whenever it is reason (all things considered) that any thing should be done, that is to be done, or must necessarily be done.* Which I prove thus: All things must proceed immediately from reason, as is proved; therefore all things must be done according to reason, for reason can do nothing contrary to reason; but it would be contrary to reason, not to have that done which reason dictates, (all things considered) should be done; therefore whatsoever reason dictates or judges (all things considered) should be done, that must necessarily be done. Seeing therefore, whatsoever can be, must be capable to be judged by reason it self, that in some circumstance or other it may be done, God can produce

## God, or nothing. 85

duce every thing, save himself, that can have an actual being; which is to be omnipotent.

Hence follows evidently, that those who put any necessary actual being of it self, save God who is reason it self, take away the omnipotency of God; for they put some actual being distinct from God, and so not God, which God cannot produce: and hence appears the vanity and blasphemy of that new revived Opinion, of an Eternal Infinite Incrated Matter, which I have already confuted.

### The ninth Attribute.

#### *The Goodness of God.*

**T**O be good is to be communicative of it self to others; therefore that which is most communicative of it self, hath the greatest goodness; but seeing all things must proceed im-

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mediately from Reason it self, which is God; God is the most communicative of himself to others; therefore God is the best of all things, or hath the greatest goodness.

### The tenth Attribute.

#### *The Purity and Sanctity of God.*

**G**OD is reason it self; therefore he can do nothing contrary to reason; but all sin is contrary to reason; therefore God can do no sin, for then reason should not be reason; therefore God essentially excludes all sin, and so is more opposite to sin then any thing else; for whatsoever is not reason it self, being indued with imperfect understanding, hath nothing essentially in its actual being, which excludes all sin; for every thing, which is not reason it self, can act contrary to reason, being left to it self, and so may sin. But the highest



highest Purity and Sanctity consists in the greatest opposition to all sin; therefore God hath the highest Purity and Sanctity of all other things. And by reason of this sovereign Sanctity, God can neither command, nor counsel, nor approve, nor be any way Author or favourer of any the least sin in others; for all these proceedings being contrary to reason, cannot be done by reason it self.

The eleventh Attribute.

*Of the infallible Veracity of God.*

**I**F God could speak any the least untruth, it must either proceed from Ignorance or Malice; not from Ignorance, for Reason it self being Knowledge it self, can be ignorant of nothing. Not from Malice, for all Malice is sin, and we have proved that Reason it self cannot sin; therefore

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God essentially excludes all untruth in speaking; therefore his Veracity in speaking is most infallible.

### The twelfth Attribute.

#### *Gods Justice.*

**H**IS Justice may be proved by the same argument: for all Injustice done to others, either proceeds from Ignorance or Malice; neither of which, as is proved, can be in God. But particularly because all Injustice is directly against reason, and reason can do nothing against reason.

### The thirteenth Attribute.

#### *Of the ever blessed Trinity.*

**T**HIS is a Mystery above the reach of all created capacity, and can neither be demonstrated, nor expressed fully

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fully by humane understanding. Only endeavours may be used to invent the easiest wayes to frame a right notion of it, as Christian Faith delivers it; which I conceive, in this expression which we have made of God, to be Reason it self in its full perfection, may with some more then ordinary facility be explicated. God therefore is Reason it self in its full perfection; therefore he is essentially a comprehensive actual Knowledge of himself, and contains all true and right reason essentially. Now this comprehensive knowledge, which reason it self is of it self, is not a mere contemplative, barren, weak, fruitless, and inefficacious Knowledge; but practical, working, strong, lively, vigorous, fecunde, and acting within it self: for if the weak acts of created understanding have power to express themselves both to others, by signs and words, and to the understanding which hath them,  
by

by occasioning the production of reflex acts upon them; it cannot be conceived, that the most perfect, nay perfection it self, in understanding, should be devoid of this perfection: and so by the infinite strength, vigor, and power of it, express it self to it self; and is no less its own expression, then its own knowledge; and because this expression, being most perfect, is most perfectly adequate and commensurate to it self; that which is expressed is that very thing, with that which expresses; for were it not that very thing, there would be some difference, and so some dissimilitude betwixt that which expresses, and that which is expressed; and then it were not (as I have shewed it must be) a most perfect and adequate expression of it self.

This infinite perfection therefore thus adequately expressing it self within it self, must also be its own approbation, love, satisfaction, joy, repose, and

and infinite content, which the expresser and the expressed take mutually and indivisibly one in the other; so that Reason it self is no less a love, joy, and full repose, in this expression, then it is an expression of it self: for it is not possible to conceive, that Reason it self should not approve, love, joy, and rest, in that expression which is the most absolute, compleat, perfect, beautiful, lovely, and ravishing expression which can be thought on: seeing therefore Reason it self, must alwayes proceed according to reason, it must necessarily love, joy, and satisfie it self in this expression. And because this joy, and satisfaction, &c. must be perfectly adequate to that wherein it joyes; for were it less then that wherein it joyes and quiesces, it were not most perfectly conform to reason; and yet reason cannot but be most perfectly conform to reason; it must be of equal perfection with that which expresses, and that which

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which is expressed; neither can it be different, or dislike in any regard to the expressing and expressed reason; for as imperfect accidental love is an accidental union of two different lovers, so the most perfect substantial love, or quintessence of love, (such as that of God is) is a substantial unity of the lover and that which is beloved; so that both, as one principle, breathe out a love which is one with them both. So that there is in this most hidden and Divine Myſtery; *Cognitio exprimens*, Knowledge expressing; and *Cognitio expressa*, Knowledge expressed; there is *Intellectio intelligens*, an intellectual act understanding; and *Intellectio intellecta*, an intellectuall act which is understood; there is *Sapientia concipiens*, Wisdom conceiving, and *Sapientia concepta*, wisdom conceived; there is *Ratio ratiocinans*, Reason reasoning; and *Ratio ratiocinata*, Reason reasoned: and yet all that is signified by

by all these terms is one and the same thing; for it neither expresses, nor understands, nor conceives, nor reasons any thing in these Divine acts, but most perfectly, and adequately what it self is; so that both what is expressed, understood, conceived, reasoned, and the formal expression, understanding, conception, ratiocination whereby we conceive that to be expressed, &c. is one and the same thing; for the action being specified by the term, when the term is one thing (as it is here) with that whence it proceeds, the action must be the same with them both; so that it is its own expression, intellection, conception, ratiocination. In like manner, there is in this mystery *Dilectio diligens*, and *Dilectio dilecta*, Love loving, and Love loved; and the same is of *Satisfaction*, *Joy*, and *full Repose*, active and passive, (as the School speaks) but I finde neither words nor time to express them;  
and

94 *Aut Deus, aut nihil.*

and yet this loving beloved love, &c. of this expressing and expressed expression, is (for the same reason) the very one self-same thing; for it loves nothing (in these acts) but what it is it self, as it expresses nothing, but what it is it self. Whence appears a most perfect and simple Unity in the Essence and Nature of God, in all those productions, and processions; which is that main fundamental Point, which Christians believe, and profess against Heathens and Infidels, in this high Mystery of the ever blessed Trinity. This Unity therefore established, I proceed to deduce briefly from the same Principles, the most sacred Trinity of the Divine Persons, which all Orthodox Christians maintain against Jews, Turks, and Heretiques; which I deduce thus: There is the same thing expressing and expressed; therefore there is the same thing producing, and produced. I prove the consequence, for



for every expression of any thing, is a production of something, as appears in all expressions which we know; if therefore this expression be a production, it must produce something; but (as I proved) it expresses nothing, save that very thing which expresses, for it is an expression of it self; therefore it produces nothing, save that very thing which, that is, which produces. It may be replied, that to understand any thing, is as much to produce the intellection of it, as to express any thing is to produce the expression of it; and therefore God by understanding himself essentially, produces himself essentially. I answer, by denying the parity; for even a created intellection may and does understand it self, without producing it self; for an intellection, so far as it is onely Contemplative and Theoretical, is onely the sight, and not the production of its object; and rather supposes its object, and is the sight

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sight of it, then either produces its object, or the sight of it; but whatsoever expresses any thing, works upon that which it expresses; and either produces it, or the expression of it, if it be different from its expression. Now I proceed. If therefore this expression be a production, and so there must be that very thing produced which produces, there must be a true distinction betwixt the producer and the produced; so that the producer is *unus*, and the produced *alius*, and consequently must make a number, and be two: and because *actiones sunt suppositorum*, and *suppositum in rationali natura* (as that of God is in the first place) is termed rightly *Persona*, a Person; therefore these must be two Divine Persons: So that there is in this expression and production, *Principians*, and *Principiatus*; One who is the Principating, and another who is derived from him who principiates. There is *Originans*, & *Originatus*,  
Gignens

*Gignens and Genitus, Pater & Filius, &c.*

Now it is impossible to conceive, that one and the same Person should be both Father and Son, generating and generated, principiating and principiated, producing and produced, expressing and expressed: for seeing these notions found real references, respects, and relations, betwixt the producer and the produced, &c. it is not possible to conceive them, without a real personal distinction, and duality in number; for one sole Person can never found a *real relation* to himself, but onely *relationem rationis*; and the same reason proves the same distinction betwixt that Love, Joy, and Repose, &c. which indivisibly proceeds from this producing and produced duality: so that there must be a triality, or number of three, in one reality; that is, one real thing thrice suppositated, and personated; or one real thing subsisting thrice; and by thrice subsisting hath a

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true

true numerality, or distinction of three. The Mystery therefore seems to me (I crave pardon, if I either think or speak amiss, and refer my judgement to those, who are impowered to allow or condemn it) to be *One thing thrice over*, and that necessarily and essentially, by force of its infinite vigor, activity, fecundity, and perfection; whereas all other things finite and limited subsist but once, as not having strength and perfection enough to give themselves a double, or a triple subsistence: which power of duplifying and triplifying it self supposed, all those seeming contrarieties and contradictions, which natural humane Reason raises up against this Mystery, will clearly appear to be meer illusions and misconceits of our weak capacity; which imagines that to be a contradiction in one thing subsisting thrice, because we finde it to be one in created things, which subsist but once: for this triality

of

of subsistence consisting in a real distinction, numerosity, and multiplication of the same thing, makes that to be equivalent to different things, whereof each have no more then one sole subsistence, or subsist but once. Thus in this Mystery there is as truly a Father and a Son, two distinct Persons, the one *ingenerate*, and *generating* the other, as father and son are two amongst men: Thus there is as real a procession of the holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, as Heat proceeds from Light and the Sun. Thus the Nature of God is perfectly one, and the Persons perfectly three; because this one Nature subsists thrice: Thus the Divine Nature is communicable, because it is one in three; and the Personalities incommunicable, because they are three in one. Seeing therefore number is an absolute perfection in created and finite beings; for two things of equal perfection are better then each of them

taken solely by it self; and the same perfection twice repeated, is better then onely once; why should this perfection be wanting to God? And seeing fecundity, to produce something of like nature to it self, is an absolute perfection in created beings; why should not God have it? And seeing Love, Charity, Joy, and Content, is an absolute perfection amongst men and Angels; why should not God enjoy that perfection properly, and perfectly, to whom no absolute perfection can be wanting? For seeing there are three ranks of perfections amongst men; The first in the rank of Essence, and intrinsecal and radical being, which may be termed *Essential*. The second, *in ordine naturæ*, or active power of such an Essence, which are termed *Natural*. And the third, *in ordine humano*; or of Sociability, and mutual Communication one with another, which we call *Moral*: I see no reason,

## God, or nothing. 101

reason, why all these ranks of perfection should not be found both perfectly and formally in God. His Unity, Omnipotency, &c. may be called his Intrinsecal, and Radical, or Primary Essential perfections, as he is considered *in ordine Essentiali*; his Fecundity and expressive Production, his Natural Perfection, as he is considered *in ordine activo*; and his Love, Friendship, Charity, Joy, &c. in the procession of the holy Ghost, his Moral Perfections, in communication and society of the Divine Persons. And yet all this is nothing *but Reason it self, and in the full latitude of its perfection*; his essential and intrinsecal notion, is the fulness of Reason; his natural activeness, is nothing but an adequate expression of that very Reason which is his Notion; his Love, Joy, Repose, &c. is no other thing, then the plenary Satisfaction in that expressing and expressed Reason; which can be no other

then a perfect conformity to Reason, and so nothing but Reason. Thus by some dark and flashing glimpses we have discovered this ever blessed Trinity, in an ever blessed Unity; one in three, and three in one; three Persons in one Nature; a number in an Unity, and one and the same thing subsisting thrice over. O most Sacred and Divine Mystery, thou art as sweet and delicious, as thou art high and inconceivable; the more I contemplate thee, the more I know thee; the more I know, the more I admire thee; the more I admire, the more I love thee; the more I love, the more I praise and adore; and the more I adore thee, the more I aspire and languish to enjoy thee! And if any of you, dear Christians, have learnt (by perusing this small Tract) to know there is *A GOD, OR NOTHING*, give me leave to exhort you, conformably to your knowledge, to admire, love, praise, adore,



adore, and covet to enjoy, as your last  
End and Bliss, *A GOD, OR NO-  
THING*: for (as devout *A Kempis*  
sayes most truly) *Quicquid Deus non  
est, nihil est, & pro nihilo reputari de-  
bet*; in a Christian estimation, what-  
soever is not God, is nothing, and is  
to be reputed as nothing.

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FINIS.

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